

School Governance Council

Verplanck Elementary School

December 9, 2013

Meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM

Council Members Present:

- Nicolas Jones, principal
- Kathleen Hackett, teacher
- Barbara Belknap, teacher
- Chelsea Gordon, teacher
- Cindy Woods, teacher
- Lynn Rhodes, community representative
- John Garaventa, community representative
- Ramon Guzman, parent
- Adam Skinner, parent
- Christina Rossetti, parent
- Julie Roach, parent
- Katrina Priest, parent
- Denise McInnish, parent
- (absent) Tarana Islam, parent

Minutes from the November meeting were reviewed with the following corrections made:

- The spelling of Catrina Priest's first name
- Adam Skinner was present
- Ramon Guzman was absent

Motion to accept the corrected minutes was made by Mrs. McInnish and seconded by Mrs. Gordon. Motion passed with a vote of 10-0.

Principal's Report:

Budget meeting 2012-2015 update: Mr. Jones reported that his request for an assistant to the principal, a behavior technician and a family resource facilitator were verbally supported by Central Office for the 2014-2015 school year.

School Governance Council bylaws were passed out to all council members as a reference.

District Improvement Plan and the Verplanck School Improvement Plan were passed out for review.

Mr. Jones went through the School improvement Plan with the following points highlighted:

- The fall NWEA was graphed with a breakdown presented by gender and ethnicity. Data will, also, be collected in January and May and growth will be measured against the fall benchmark.
- K-5 strategies to be employed for improvements in the area of literacy/math are vocabulary development, Depth of Knowledge (DOK) style questioning and writer's workshop (Lucy Calkins method).

- Data teams will be instrumental in pinpointing appropriate instruction for all students with “dipstick” assessments focusing on identified students in a six week intense SRBI group.
- Verplanck will strengthen its culture of looking at data to move our scholars in the area of literacy and math. Data confirms the direction instruction should move.
- School climate will be addressed by working towards a 10 % reduction in office behavioral referrals. Current referrals are considerably below last year’s September-November rate. On a positive note, the new program, Parent Paws, outweigh office referrals 4:1! Parent Paws are positive comments from a parent/guardian.
- Also addressed in the School Improvement plan is the goal of increasing family involvement by 20%. Teachers have recorded an 80% attendance rate in fall conference. Discussion centered on the spring parent survey and how to increase parents participating in the online event. A parent pasta dinner is being considered with the library computer lab being available for parents to use for the survey.
- Finally, a Welcoming School Committee is being formed to include teachers, staff and parents. Ms Roach and Ms. Priest expressed an interest in joining.
- Mr. Jones is in conversation with an nonprofit agency out of Bristol, We Impact as a resource for school climate issues.

New Business:

- Verplanck will host a public open forum on Thursday, December 19th at 7:00. Topic at hand is the Smart School report on the future of elementary schools in Manchester.
- Parking issues are still a concern at arrival and dismissal.
- At our next meeting, creating a School Compact with parents, teachers, administrator and students will be discussed.

Next meeting: Monday, January 6, 2014 5-6PM School Library

Meeting was adjourned at 6:00PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rhodes, secretary